

Glossary

Arterial Road: Generally, a publicly owned and maintained road, designed with restricted access and primarily intended to carry “through” traffic at 45 to 55 miles per hour.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): BRT is essentially transit on rubber wheels rather than rail. It combines the features of conventional buses and a rapid transit system, such as Metrorail. To save time, passengers would pay their fares when they enter the station, not when they board the bus. They would enter low-floor buses through one of several doors, the way subway riders enter a Metrorail car. Buses would run every few minutes and would stop at designated station platforms.

Capital Improvements Program (CIP): The County’s plan for future capital project expenditures. This plan spells out the capital facilities that the County plans to finance, including schools, libraries, parks, etc.

Chicane: A form of curb extensions that alternate from one side of the street to the other. A traffic calming technique.

Choker: Facing curb extensions that narrow the street at a particular location. A traffic calming technique.

Collector Road: A road into which local roads funnel and which, in turn, carries traffic to an arterial road. Ideally a collector road would have few private entrances accessing it directly.

Community Plan: Specific detailed land use plans to be developed for the four communities of the Suburban Policy Area: Ashburn, Dulles, Potomac, and Sterling.

Commuter Rail: Long-haul rail passenger service operating between metropolitan and suburban areas, whether within or across the geographical boundaries of a state, usually characterized by reduced fares for multiple rides, and commutation tickets for regular, recurring riders. Also known as “regional rail” or “suburban rail.”

Comprehensive Plan: The general plan for the County and its supporting components, including the *Revised Countywide Transportation Plan*. Every County in Virginia must have a Comprehensive Plan, which spells out policies for future development in order to ensure orderly growth and the protection of the public health and welfare. The Comprehensive Plan may consist of a number of components, such as local area plans, service plans, and strategic plans.

Controlled Access: Access onto divided roadways concentrated at median crossovers. Individual parcel access highly discouraged, with access provided through interparcel connections and consolidated access points.

dB(A) Leq (h): A measurement of highway traffic noise. dB (A) is the A-weighted levels, or decibels adjusted to approximate the way that an average person hears sound. Leq is the constant, average sound level. Highways that cause noise levels to be experienced at exterior residential locations above 67 dB (A) Leq and at exterior commercial locations above 72 dB (A) Leq are considered to have a negative impact and should be mitigated as part of roadway improvement projects.

Demand Responsive Transportation Services: Door to door transit service, usually by a small 13-passenger shuttle bus whereby a person telephones to schedule a pickup during operating hours.

Design Speed: Recommended speed, which sets the design standards for new and/or improved road sections. The design speed is usually 5 to 10 mph more than the posted speed limit. The design speed should be flexible to minimize the impact of the improvement on the existing corridor, while maintaining safety.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): The document prepared as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. A Draft EIS (DEIS), followed by a public hearing and final EIS (FEIS) are prepared. Occasionally, a Supplemental DEIS is prepared to address a change in circumstance. These documents are the result of a systematic, comprehensive review process designed to identify and evaluate the potential impacts of a project.

Fixed Route Transit Service: Bus service on a fixed route and fixed schedule. Loudoun Transit in Leesburg is an example of a fixed-route transit service.

Heavy Rail: High-speed, passenger rail cars operating singly or in trains of two or more cars on fixed rails in separate rights-of-way from which all other vehicular and foot traffic are excluded. Also known as “rapid rail,” “subway,” “elevated (railway),” or “metropolitan railway (metro).”

Heritage Resource: Any historic, architectural, archeological, or scenic site, structure, landscape or object that has cultural significance to the community.

Induced Travel Demand: Traffic growth produced by the addition of capacity in the transportation system or a reduction in the price of travel.

Joint Land Management Area (JLMA): The growth area surrounding an incorporated town and served by public water and sewer or projected to be served in the near future. The JLMA is planned cooperatively by the County and the Towns. The boundary of the JLMA marks the edge of utility service and distinguishes between significantly different land uses and thus is an urban growth boundary.

Level of Service (LOS): A qualitative measure describing operational conditions within a traffic stream, generally in terms of such factors as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort and convenience, and safety. Traffic flow conditions are divided into six levels of service (LOS) ranging from LOS “A” (ideal, free flow) through LOS “F” (breakdown). The Northern Virginia Transportation Coordinating Council (TCC) coined a seventh LOS “G”, to describe the breakdown in travel conditions over an expanded peak period.

Light Rail: Lightweight passenger rail cars operating singly (or in short, usually two-car, trains) on fixed rails in right-of-way that is not separated from other traffic for much of the way. Light rail vehicles are driven electrically with power being drawn from an overhead electric line via a trolley or a pantograph. Also known as “streetcar,” “tramway,” or “trolley car.”

Limited Access: Access onto roadway restricted to grade separated interchanges. No at-grade access is allowed.

Local Access: Relatively unrestricted individual parcel access directly onto roadway. Individual residential parcel access highly discouraged, with access provided through interparcel connections and consolidated access points.

Local Road: A public, state-owned and maintained road designed for direct access to individual lots.

Major Collector: A roadway that carries traffic through the county, provides a connection between arterials, and is accessed by minor collectors and/or rural secondary roads.

Minor Arterial: A roadway that serves commuter traffic with access from major and minor collectors.

Minor Collector: A roadway that carries traffic from local subdivision streets and rural secondary roads to major collectors and/or arterials.

Mode: The method of travel—by auto, train, bus, plane, bicycle, or foot.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA): Federal law that requires that any major federal action or policy that has a significant impact on the environment will require the preparation of an EIS. The EIS must address:

- the environmental impact of the proposed action,
- any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided should the proposal be implemented,
- alternatives to the proposed action,
- the relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity,
- and any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented.

Non-attainment area: An area designated by the EPA and federal law under the Clean Air Act that does not meet federal pollution standards.

Paratransit: A form of demand responsive, door to door transportation service that is tailored to serve the needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Parking Cashout Program: A parking cashout program occurs when an employer makes employees pay to park in their own lot while giving the employees the money to make the payment. This is a TDM strategy because it presumes that some enterprising employees will find alternative means to get to work (e.g., carpool) to avoid paying this money back.

Pave-in-place: The Commonwealth's pave-in-place program allows the county to pave gravel roads within a narrow, forty-foot right-of-way for those roads carrying between 50 and 750 vehicles per day, in a manner that is sensitive to the rural character of the roadway.

Primary Road: A road owned by the Virginia Department of Transportation whose construction and/or maintenance is funded through the Virginia Transportation Development Program (VTDP).

Principal Arterial: A roadway that serves regional and intrastate traffic with access from minor arterials and major collectors.

Proffered Condition/Proffer: A voluntary promise or commitment given in writing by a developer to construct certain improvements, to make certain donations, or to develop property subject to specified conditions to mitigate the impact of the proposed development land and to develop the property in accord with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995 (PPTA): The legislative framework enabling the Commonwealth of Virginia, qualifying local governments and certain other political entities to enter into agreements authorizing private entities to acquire, construct, improve, maintain, and/or operate qualifying transportation facilities.

Raised crosswalk: A location where the crossing elevation is slightly higher than the roadway elevation. A traffic calming technique.

Scenic Highway: A road located within a protected corridor and having recreational, historic or scenic interest.

Secondary Road: A road owned by VDOT whose construction and/or maintenance is funded through the Virginia Secondary Road Improvement Program (SRIP).

Speed Bump: A raised hump in the paved surface of a street that extends across the street, usually not more than five inches high. A traffic calming technique.

Traffic Calming: Measures to reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. Traffic calming includes both physical measures and non-physical measures (community education and enforcement). See also choker, chicane, raised crosswalk, traffic circle or roundabouts, and speed bump.

Traffic circle or roundabout: A raised island which traffic drives around, that is usually landscaped and located at the intersection of two residential streets. A traffic calming technique.

Transit: A shared mode of transportation, which often operates on a fixed route and fixed schedule, and is available to all who pay the fare; however, demand responsive transportation, which does not operate on a fixed route or fixed schedule is also a form of transit. Other examples include bus, light rail, and heavy rail.

Transit Center: A place where transit services connect in the transportation network and where passengers transfer between transportation modes.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD): Moderate- and high-density housing, along with complementary public uses, jobs, retail, and services concentrated in mixed-use developments along points along a transit system.

Transit Station: Structures that house both passengers and transportation systems operations and equipment.

Transit Stop: A location along the street or transit line that has simple facilities such as signage and shelters.

Travel Demand Forecasting Model: A computer program based on a series of mathematical equations that simulates the performance of the transportation system given a set of land use conditions. It estimates trip generation (how much travel), trip distribution (who goes where), mode choice (how people travel), and route choice. It provides decision makers with information related to questions such as:

- Which land use scenario yields the least amount of travel by private automobile?
- Where will traffic congestion likely appear?
- How will future traffic congestion levels be affected by various potential land use and development scenarios?
- What types of transportation investments will most improve future mobility?
- How many people will use public transit or car for their trip to work?

Travel Demand Management Strategies (TDM): A wide range of strategies designed to maximize the people-moving capability of the transportation system by increasing the number of persons in a vehicle, or by influencing the time of, or need to, travel.

Virginia Byway: Road or part of a road having a high aesthetic or cultural value or leading to an area of significant historical, national or recreational interest. Designation by VDOT on recommendation of the Commission on Outdoor Recreation with approval by the local Board of Supervisors. Designation does not imply any particular protection of the roadway from development or structural improvements.